

# LANTERN

NUMBER 23 + + + + AUTUMN 1978

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## INTRODUCTION

This edition of LANTERN marks another step in the chequered history of the magazine. We are pleased to launch in this and subsequent issues a supplement in the form of 'SPELLTHORN' being a journal-cum-newsletter of the EAST SUFFOLK AND NORFOLK ANTIQUARIANS, a group which works closely with the B.S.I.G. I won't say too much about it here as it's aims are covered in detail in No.1 following. Suffice to say that it's compiler Mike Burgess is anxious to make it serve as a modern 'notes and queries' service dealing with miscellaneous 'tit-bits' of information from the four corners of East Anglia. If you've any odd note or come across anything, no matter how obscure, pertaining to the folklore and legends of this region, please send it on to Mike, I know he'll be very pleased to receive and publish it. Likewise, if you've got a query on some point, drop Mike a line and he'll publish it. The success of SPELLTHORN depends to some extent on feed-back; so start digging out those notes! Mike address (for those that still don't know it!) is 21 Kirkley Gardens, Lowestoft, Suffolk.

Ivan Bunn - Editor

+ + + + + GLEANINGS FROM THE LOWESTOFT JOURNAL + + + + +  
+ 20th July 1889: On Wednesday morning at 6 o'clock a waterspout was seen a- +  
+ bout 2 miles east of Gorleston. It was observed to proceed in the direction +  
+ of Gorleston and break in about a quarter of an hour from the time of its +  
+ having been first seen. +  
+ 7th June, 1890: There is now on view at Mr. Howard Bunn's, naturalist, 160 +  
+ High Street, Lowestoft, a chicken having four legs, Four wings, two heads, +  
+ and two bodies. It is joined down the centre of the head, or otherwise +  
+ would have been two perfect chickens. The above was hatched this week in +  
+ Lowestoft. +  
+ 21st June, 1890: On Monday afternoon the air was literally alive with small +  
+ reddish-brown beetles, which the hot, oppressive, south westerly wind - +  
+ what little there was of it - seemed to beat helplessly into one's eyes +  
+ and nostrils, and on their clothes in a very annoying manner. Many were +  
+ scarcely longer than the 16th of an inch, whilst numbers were less in size +  
+ than a pin's head. +  
+ 25th July, 1891: The series of atmospheric phenomena of the present week cul- +  
+ minated on Thursday afternoon with a waterspout at sea, which was observable +  
+ by numerous spectators on the Hills, who were present at the review of the +  
+ Volunteers...and for the time being eclipsed in interest the special purp- +  
+ ose for which they had gathered in that neighbourhood. +  
+ + + + +

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BOOK REVIEW

THE GLASTONBURY ZODIAC: Key to the Mysteries of Britain..by Mary Caine,  
Grael Communications, 63 Abbey Road, Torquay, Devon. Soft cover, 284pp,  
A4 size. £4.95 plus p & p.

Copiously illustrated with many maps, drawings and aerial photographs, this hefty book is one of the few major works on any terrestrial zodiac to be published within the last 50 years. Following on from Katherine Maltwood's original research of the 1920's, Mrs. Caine has developed and extended the thesis to an incredible degree and, rightly or wrongly, it stands as a monument to her tenacity and imagination. As with her previous booklet (see 'The Kingston Zodiac'; Lantern 22) I remain curiously unconvinced as to the zodiac's ultimate reality, but that, until the facts are finally uncovered, must remain a topic for personal interpretation. By way of allusion and rhetorical questioning, Mrs. Caine at first insinuates the concept into the reader's mind, then forces it in deeply until it is no longer possible to simply straddle the fence. Perhaps it is time for a book to be written showing the other side of the argument, in the way that 'Some trust in Chariots' and the more recent 'The Space-Gods Revealed' have turned the odious Von Daniken upside down. Any offers, or will I have to do it myself? Despite my bias, I have to admit that the GLASTONBURY ZODIAC is first-class reading, and a masterly (even, in places, humorous) exposition of a subject that is at once intriguing, annoying and baffling, and is currently arousing more interest than all of our UFOs, ghosts and psychiana put together. Yes, it really is the "in-thing" of the moment (See 'Spellthorn No. 1' in this issue!)

M.W.Burgess

Witches - of the black, white, grey and publicity-seeking types - have flourished all over the country, despite the witch-hunts of yesteryear, but there are certain areas where their roots are strongest and East Anglia is one of them. This is as true today as it was 400 years ago.

Public evidence of witchcraft activities is hard to come by but in September, 1963, a wax image of a man and a woman was found nailed to the oak door of Castle Rising in Norfolk. According to a folklore expert called in by the police, this was the work of a witch consulted by a local girl who had been jilted in a love affair.

The witches of East Anglia have a famous pedigree. During his campaign against Hereward the Wake in the 11th century, William the Conqueror used a witch from the Norfolk marshes to cast spells on the rebels. This witch came from the village of Brandon which is still said to house a flourishing coven today.

Matthew Hopkins, the infamous 17th century witch-finder and rogue, utilised East Anglia as his favourite hunting ground during a reign of terror which lasted nearly 10 years and which claimed the lives of dozens of innocent people. In the most cases Hopkins selected harmless old women suffering from senile decay as his victims and charged an exorbitant fee to rid villages and towns of their 'witches'.

Hopkins himself, despite his evil activities, is thought by some modern members of the Craft to have been a renegade witch. He certainly owned an impressive collection of magical talismans, amulets and charms. These included a bird's claw, a small wax head with a rusty nail in it and a six-pointed star of

# WITCHCRAFT IN \* EAST \* S ANGLIA

MIKE HOWARD

King Solomon which he kept in an old wooden box together with a wand surmounted by a cross made of (human?) bone. A photograph of these weird objects was published in a 1939 issue of 'Folklore' magazine.

Opinions differ as to how Hopkins met his death. Some say he was 'ducked' as a witch, found guilty and lynched by an angry mob. Others say he died from natural causes in bed. Whatever the truth anyone today who has the misfortune to bear his family name is hardly likely to be treated with much friendliness by East Anglian witch-folk!!

One of the best known witches of the area in modern times lived at the village of Canewdon in Essex until his death at an old age in 1909. He was George Pickingill or Pickingale, a farm labourer with amazing psychic powers, who was much-feared in the village and, if rumour can be believed, had a reputation as a wizard which travelled as far as the high society of London.

According to an old tradition in the village there will always be nine witches in Canewdon as long as the tower of the parish church stands and Pickingill was reputed to have been the local witch-master or 'Magister' who had the hereditary power to summon the coven together for meetings.

It is actually true that Pickingill was regarded as something of a celebrity in the village. Old people have told me that when the first car came to Canewdon in the 1890s, it was Old George - as he was called - who was photographed in the new-fangled contraption. When he died his cottage near the old Anchor Inn was said to have been haunted by his imps who terrorised passersby until the building was demolished.

Historically, one case of witchcraft is reported from Canewdon. This was in 1580 when a spinster named Rose Pye was accused of bewitching to death a young child. In 1847, according to Phillip Benton who was a noted Essex Historian, the remains of a huge statue "said to be a heathen deity was dug up in the parish of Canewdon together with a number of bones which crumbled away when exposed to the air". Sadly this interesting relic of pagan worship in the area was broken-up and used to repair one of the local roads.

Today, Canewdon is largely built-up and a new housing estate has replaced many of the old cottages. However, it does still possess an uncanny atmosphere and is still regarded by many old people in the area as the traditional centre of East Anglian witchcraft.

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NOTE: Mike Howard is the editor of a quarterly newsletter called 'THE CAULDRON' which deals with all aspects of Witchcraft, Folklore and the Old Religion for full details and a sample copy send 20p (blank PO, please) to Mike at 18a Church Hill, Purley, Surrey. Mike is also very interested in hearing from any readers who have knowledge of witch traditions, either past or present, in East Anglia.

#### IT'S THOSE WITCHES STONES AGAIN!

This seems to be a suitable place to make mention again of the "Witches' Stones" in Lowestoft's Belle Vue Park which have been referred several times in previous LANTERNS mostly in connection with the legend that, unless bathed in fire, they run down to the sea at the first stroke of midnight. Other names for this heap of cemented rocks have been "the old mill stone", and the 'beacon stones", and it has long been known as the remains of a 16th century beacon tower, a forerunner of the present light house. We now find that it was first set-up in 1550 by the Marquis of Northampton and was one of a pair in Lowestoft; the other being at the top of Green Score (Now Links Road). In 1584 it was feared that Spain would shortly launch her armada against England, and because of its crucial proximity to the Netherlands, the Island of Lothingland upon which Lowestoft stands was regarded as a prime target. Thus, a commission of enquiry was set up to look into the readiness of the area's defences and alarms, their report being released in June of that year. From this we discover that, by this time, the Green Score beacon had completely decayed and a windmill erected on its site. Its restoration was recommended but never carried out, and as it happened, the Armada sailed not then but 4 years later and from a totally different quarter.

# RECENT HAUNTINGS

In April this year the Rev. Hayden Foster, his wife Margo and their baby son moved into the rambling 16th century rectory at Polstead, Suffolk. A few days later they moved out again after Mrs. Foster had a series of terrifying experiences there. Recounting what happened, Rev. Foster said:

"...about 3am we were laying half awake, when Margot saw the walls of the bedroom change from being freshly painted to peeling, damp, old wallpaper - just as it might have looked 20 or 30 years ago. She heard screaming like a child - but it wasn't Gerard (their 2 year old son) - and she felt like she was being suffocated or strangled. Margot was trying to say the Lord's Prayer, but she just couldn't get it out because of this overwhelming force".

"I felt, too, that there was real danger in that room. There's a definite feeling of evil in that place and that's all I can put it down to."

Mr. Foster stressed that neither he nor his wife had believed in ghosts previously. "Margot is a science graduate", he added, "and always says that there is a logical reason for everything."

Mrs. Foster had to visit the doctor because of the tension caused by her experience, and boy Gerard woke up for several weeks "screaming, not crying" at the same time at night. Mr. Foster went on, "I thought the archdeacon and bishop would laugh at me, but it turned quite a few people knew the rectory had had a history."

Later it came to light that, not only did the Bishop know that the place had a 'history', but he also knew that 7 years earlier an exorcism had been held there in a bid to drive out 'evil spirits'.

Once the story of the haunted rectory 'broke', others came forward with information concerning previous phenomena. Mrs. Mary Neads, widow of the former rector of Polstead said that she had had several unexplained happenings during her 16 years at the rectory. "I never saw anything, but we heard heavy steps coming up the stairs

about 11.30 one night, and several times we heard people coming down the gravel drive and found there was no-one there when we went to greet them."

Early in August this year, Malcom Ramplin, secretary of the East Anglian Psychological Research Unit and BSIG member, spent a night at the rectory with a reporter and photographer from the East Anglian Daily Times. As usual on such sojourns nothing at all happened although Malcolm did comment on the almost un-natural silence in the building.

During their stay however, the investigators did find one possible explanation for Mrs. Foster's peeling wallpaper experience. In one corner of the bedroom is a walk-in cupboard; its aged wallpaper is now damp and peeling. It is possible that the cupboard door swung open, so that Mrs. Foster who saw it in her half asleep state, thought that the bedroom itself was changing.

At the time of writing the EAPRU are still continuing their investigations into the haunting at Polstead Rectory.

SOURCE: EAST ANGLIAN DAILY TIMES:

1st, 2nd, and 5th August, 1978.

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## 'THE PHANTOM PICTURE MOVER'

Still on the subject of ghostly happenings, the EADT of July 11, 1978, carried the following report:-

'Paintings are mysteriously "moving" in the night in the 18th century Bury St. Edmunds art gallery and organisers of the latest exhibition are wondering if the building is haunted. Yesterday - for the fourth day running - Mr. Brian O'Hanlon, chairman of Bury Art Society, arrived to find some pictures noticeably on the skew...."We started hanging the paintings four days ago because it's a long job. They are left perfectly alright, yet the next morning a number are definitely tilted. I'm beginning to wonder if it is not the work of a dead member whose painting was rejected and has come back to haunt us".

On a practical level, there are theories about possible vibration from the traffic or tension involving the hanging materials being to blame.

But Mr. O'Hanlon says there is very little vibration..."

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Fortean Students might like to note that in the above 2 reports there is an 'Irish connection'; Rev. Foster comes from there and the Chairman at Bury is Mr. O'Hanlon.



# BLACK TOBY

by  
IVAN  
BUNN

In many local legends and ghost stories there lies, just below the surface, a hard-core of historical fact. In this and forthcoming editions of *INTERN* I intend to illustrate the facts which are hidden behind some of these stories.

Traditionally, the parish of Blythburgh in Suffolk is haunted by a phantom black hearse, pulled by black horses and driven by the ghost of 'Black Toby'. Legend relates how, during the middle of the 18th century, Tobias Gill a negro drummer in a regiment of dragoons, a detachment of which was stationed at Blythburgh; went out one night and in the course of the evening got very drunk at the ancient 'White Hart' Inn. Eventually he staggered from the Hart and made his way across the nearby common to his billet. On the way he encountered a girl from Walberswick by the name of Anne Blakemore. Gill attacked and raped the unfortunate girl and then strangled her with a handkerchief. Overcome by the effort of his crime he collapsed into a drunken stupor beside the girl's body. Next morning he was found there by passing farm-workers, still fast asleep. They woke him up and, after a violent struggle, overpowered him and he was dragged off to the White Hart where he was locked-up to await the local magistrate. Gill was subsequently sent for trial, found guilty, executed, and his body hanged in chains at a crossroads on Blythburgh Common.

Legend also asserts that throughout his trial Gill vigorously protested his innocence and it is said that even as he stood beneath the gallows he continued to do so and that he made a last, desperate appeal for his life to be spared. He saw the London mailcoach approaching and asked if a halter could be put round his neck and the other end of the rope tied to it so that he could run by its side for his life. But there was no altering the course of justice and the sentence was carried out in accordance with the law.

After the execution it soon became common belief that those out late at night would see the phantom hearse (some say coach) in which was the earth-bound spirit of Tobias Gill who, deprived of a grave and a christian burial, was doomed to drive himself to Hell every night.

Miss Joan Forman, writing in 1974, says that despite extensive enquiries in the neighbourhood she could find no record of the manifestation being witnessed in recent times (which is hardly surprising!)

The earliest reference that I have been able to find of the legend dates from 1842, which seems to indicate that the 'phantom coach' story was well established by the beginning of the 19th century.

That Tobias Gill was, in fact, tried and found guilty of murder on Blythburgh heath there is no doubt, for the event seems to have caused something of a stir both in Suffolk and further afield. The London 'Evening Post' dated July 3, 1750, reports:

'On Monday last week Tobias Gill, a Black, one of the drummers in Sir R. Riches regiment of Dragoons, was committed to the County Gaol of Suffolk, the Coroner's Inquest having found him guilty of the murder of Anne Wakemore, of Walberswick'.

Unfortunately, I have not as yet been able to ascertain the exact date the murder took place. Toby would have initially appeared at the first convenient quarter sessions at Ipswich, which in this case was the Summer Session held in June (the Spring Session being in April). From which it is logical to deduce that the crime was committed sometime between April and June 1750. After being found guilty at the Coroner's Court Toby would have been held in custody at Ipswich until the next County Assize which were held at Bury St. Edmunds, (these being half-yearly in March and August), when his trial would take place.

Incidentally, the 'Evening Post' report seems to have got Anne's surname wrong, all other papers, including the more reliable local editions, refer to her as Blakemore, a common name in Walberswick at that time. Toby's trial took



place in the August of 1750 and was reported in the 'Ipswich Journal' on Saturday, August 25th 1750:

'Ipswich, August 24th - At the Assizes held at Bury for this County Toby Gill, one of the Black Drummers belonging to Sir R. Riches Regiment of Dragoons, received sentence of death for the murder of Anne Blakemore, of Walberswick. Friday the 14th of next month, is appointed for his execution, which will probably be at this town, and he is to be hanged in chains near the Place where the murder was committed'.

The 'Journals' supposition that Toby would be hanged "at this town" (presumably they meant Ipswich) was wrong, for in their issue dated Saturday, September 15th 1750, they reported:

'Yesterday Gill, the Black, was carried from hence to Blythburgh in order to be executed today at the place where he is to be hanged in chains.'

So the legend agrees with the facts here; but not only was Toby hanged in chains on Blythburgh heath, but the execution was carried out there as well. Little wonder that the event left an indelible mark on this quiet Suffolk backwater!+

After the trial the 'Evening Post' expounded a bit more on Tobys crimes:

'The Papers have taken some notice of the condemnation of one Toby Gill, a Black, at the last Assizes for the County of Suffolk, but the enormity of his crime, which was murder, has not been sufficiently made known. He was a Drummer in Sir R. Riches regiment, and a very drunken, profligate fellow. He met or overtook the poor woman he murdered on the road, and on her refusing to comply with his lewd proposal strangled her with her own Handkerchief and then abused her dying and dead. Overcome with liquor he was found asleep by the Body, and immediately sent to prison. He was convicted on clear evidence, and ordered to be hanged in chains. The very worthy person who tried him expressed himself in passing sentence thus: "I never before desired a power of executing the legal penalties, but if I had such a power I should exercise it in this case".

As it was common practise to leave the body (after it had been dipped in tar) hanging in chains for many months as a deterrent for others, I would imagine that Blythburgh Heath was a place well avoided by the locals, especially after dark. It is hardly surprising that strange tales would soon collect around the place where the creaking gibbet stood with its gruesome burden, and it must have been from these tales that the current legend of a phantom coach must have originated. Incidentally, it is said that the gibbet stood on the heath for the best part of 50 years, and when it finally fell to pieces a master thatcher living in the vicinity made a thatching comb from the nails! This however is a part of the legend that I have not been able to verify (although I often wonder what became of Toby's bones).

The exact place where the crime and subsequent execution took place is not known, although traditionally it is said to be at a crossroads on the heath. However, as long ago as the early 1830's a particular stretch of heath, about one mile south of Blythburgh village, was called 'Toby's Walks'. It seems more than likely that it was somewhere here that the execution, if not the murder, took place. Today this portion of the heath is still marked 'Toby's Walks' on the current Ordnance Survey maps, but unfortunately the heath itself was put to the plough some 5 years ago by the owner because of vandalism in the form of rubbish dumping. However, a section of heathland does still exist with this name, for on the opposite side of the main A12 road a council picnic area has been opened with the same name.

As well as haunting Blythburgh heath, the ghost of 'Black Toby' is also reputed to haunt a large barn which stands by the roadside not more than a quarter of a mile from 'Tobys Walks'. This barn is well known locally as 'Tobys Barn'. It is a gaunt red-brick building which at one time had a thatched roof

now sadly replaced with mundane tiles. Only 100 yards or so away from the barn stands 'Tobys Cottage' which has been modernised beyond all recognition. Unfortunately it has not been possible to date either the barn or the cottage although the former shows every indication of being of 18th century or even earlier construction. Both buildings are marked (although not by name) on the first edition O.S. map dating from 1836.

There is nothing, apart from the ghost story, to link the barn with Toby. But, considering the evidence in the name Tobys Walks and the age of the barn, it seems more than likely that it is in some way connected with the sad events of 1750. I thought at first it might have been the place in which Toby was incarcerated whilst awaiting transport to Ipswich immediately after the murder, but I have since learned that Blythburgh possessed a small gaol which was still standing in 1754 (although nobody now seems to know where it was located). The more likely connection might be that it was in this barn that Toby and the rest of the detachment of dragoons were billeted, certainly the building is big enough. No obvious connection between the murder and 'Tobys Cottage' has been found and I'm not so sure that there is one, I've a sneaking suspicion that the name comes from someone jumping on the Toby 'bandwagon'. I'm still making enquiries into this.

The regiment of Dragoons in question was Sir Robert Riches' Regiment (later the 4th Dragoons, now the 4/7 Royal Dragoons) almost certainly employed to help the Excise men on 'anti-smuggling' patrols on the nearby cliffs at Walberswick and Dunwich. It was not at all unusual to find negro bandsmen in the British Army at this particular period, some regiments, particularly in those that considered themselves the 'elite' had their entire band made of negroes.

The soldiers that assisted the excise men in Suffolk (as elsewhere) at this time seem to have been much disliked by the local people who were almost all, (including the clergy) involved in a very lucrative smuggling trade. It is interesting to remember that legend avers that Toby maintained his innocence of the murder of Anne Blakemore right until the very end. Leonard Thompson, in his book 'Smugglers of the Suffolk Coast' speculates that perhaps the whole thing was a rather hasty reaction (perhaps even a 'frame-up') by the people of Blythburgh because Toby was a soldier. He says:

"...scarcely was the gibbet's pathetic burden swaying and creaking in the wind than Blythburgh people began to wonder - was Anne Blakemore really murdered? It was realised, too late, that her body bore no signs of injury. Could it have been that the girl, wandering along the walks on that June evening, her thoughts perhaps far away, and never having seen a negro before, had suddenly come face to face with the black featured figure, and had died of sheer, instantaneous fright...?"

Unfortunately Thompson does not say where he got the information from regarding the fact that Anne's body bore no signs of injury, in fact the opposite seems to be the case for the press reports state categorically that she was strangled. This question could best be resolved by studying the original trial and inquest reports which, despite extensive searching and enquiries, I have as yet been unable to locate.

Anne Blakemore, despite the fact that she was the victim, remains a very hazy character. I have tried to unearth a bit more about her but with little or no success. The name Blakemore was quite common in Walberswick at this time, but I could find no reference in the Parish Records of the baptism of an Anne Blakemore. Perhaps even odder is the fact that there is no record, as would be expected, of her burial there after the murder, despite the fact that all the press reports at the time state that she lived there. There certainly is no record of her burial there or in Blythburgh, or any of the parishes in the immediate neighbourhood whose records are still extant. It is possible, I suppose, that the body was taken to Ipswich for the inquest and interred there, but this seems very unlikely. There is however one very odd entry in the Walberswick parish registers which is worth bearing in mind when we remember that Toby protested his innocence to the end; the entry reads:

'Thomas Archer and Anne Blakemore was married on February 11th 1752'

It would be silly to jump to conclusions over this single entry, especially when



the same records show that in 1742 an Anne Blakemore was widowed upon the death of her husband Robert. It is possible that the 1752 entry refers to her, although if it does then it is odd that the entry does not refer to her as a widow as was usual. Another fact that points to the 1752 Anne Blakemore and the 1742 Anne Blakemore not being the same person is that it has been possible to estimate the age of the Widow Blakemore from the records; she would have been well turned 50 in 1752 and the records show that Thomas Archer and Anne had a child in October 1752. Now although it is not impossible (or unknown) for a woman in her 50's to have a child the facts seem to point to the fact that the 1752 Anne Blakemore was a younger woman. All the parish records of both Walberswick and Blythburgh from this period (including the Manor Court books) make no reference to the murder of execution.

The above is really all idle speculation and far more research (still in full swing) is required before any definite conclusions, if any can be reached.

However, assuming as we must that Tobias Gill did murder Anne on Blythburgh Heath, two points keep nagging away in the back of my mind: (1) What was Anne doing there late at night and miles from her native village? (2) If the newspaper report is correct, then how did Toby manage to get his hands on her handkerchief? Could it have been a pre-arranged meeting that went dreadfully wrong for Anne? Alas, we shall probably never know.....

Of one thing though we can be certain. On that fateful night back in 1750 as Tobias Gill staggered home drunk across Blythburgh Heath, he little thought that the events which were soon to follow would leave his name stamped on that small corner of Suffolk countryside; or that his deed would echo down through 228 years of tumultuous history!

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MYSTERY LIGHTS:(continued from p.14). in July 1972, the lifeboat at Lowestoft was launched after reports of red, green and bluish lights having been seen. July, 1973 saw another fiery display over Norfolk and Suffolk when a 'fantastic shooting star' with "bits falling off and making a hissing noise" was reported from the North Norfolk Coast down to the Suffolk border.

SOURCES: Lowestoft Journal: 23/2/1968; 7/8/1971; 18/6/1972; 25/9/1973.  
 Eastern Daily Press: 21/11/68.

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Readers interested in 'secret tunnels' (following Mike Burgess's article in LANTERN 22) might like to know that in the magazine SUFFOLK FAIR for July 1978, there appears an article 'The Mysterious tunnels under Bury', together with a follow-up in the August 1978 edition.

The May, 1978 edition of EAST ANGLIA MONTHLY has a number of articles which might be of interest to LANTERN readers; these include 'UFOs Over East Anglia?'; 'Reincarnation'; and the story of Piers Shonks, the dragon slayer of Brent Pelham. The September edition of the same mag., has an article dealing with the ghost of Matthew Hopkins and the Thorn Inn at Mistley, Essex, together with an interesting (but somewhat unconvincing) photograph taken by the author which has the ghostly image of a man on it which appeared when the film was being processed. Unfortunately the writer of the article gives no details regarding the type of camera, film used or conditions at the time, but LANTERN hopes to contact him and set the record straight. We also hope to reproduce the photograph in the next edition of LANTERN.

# ...U.F.O.... ..NEWS.....

Two BSIG members attended the recent conference organised by the NORTHERN UFO NETWORK - NUFON - held on 24th June, which, although not very well attended, had a good programme of subjects and speakers.

The morning session consisted of the showing of some clips of cine film from the now de-classified 'Project Blue Book'. Although many of the films were of poor quality and their evaluation necessarily inconclusive, some clips showing the trace of an unidentified object on a radar screen were most interesting.

Next followed two films made by NASA speculating on the possibilities of extra-terrestrial life and its implications.

The afternoon lectures were not very well received by some members of the audience, many of whom were members of the general public. I say not very well received because the session's speakers were concerned mainly with the newer theoretical aspects of UFO research, lines of thought that are not generally compatible with the ETH orientated public. "The New Ufology" was the title of the first talk which was tape-recorded by John Rimmer of MUFOB. Peter Rogers, also of MUFOB, was there to answer questions afterwards. The main point made in this talk was that most UFO researchers usually file a report 'unidentified' after satisfying themselves that no normal physical effect has caused the phenomena. They should look further, he said, by studying the psychological aspects of the event, which may reveal a non-physical but feasible solution. His ideas were supported by one or two cases which were investigated in this manner.

Next came a talk by NUFON's secretary, Jenny Randles, entitled "Exotic UFOs, Fact or Fancy?" Using slides, Jenny outlined the ways in which it was possible for a witness to be misled by perfectly natural objects, phenomena or mental processes. Another point which was brought up in most of the talks was the fact that although the ETH was very popular, there is very little evidence, if any, in favour of it. All the more reason, perhaps, for exploring the para-normal aspects for the answer.

Once again, John Hind from Ireland gave a talk on the newer aspects of ufology. Entitled "Ufologists and Society", he expounded his ideas on the 'myth' and 'magic' of the UFO with cases to back up his theory.

Also of MUFOB, Roger Sandell gave a talk on the "Roots of UFO Cultism". Roger examined the ways in which cults start and their effect on humanity as a whole. After all the talks, there was sufficient time for questions from the Audience.

The evening session saw Philip Jenkinson reviewing science fiction films, starting with some of the old silent movies and progressing through the years,

illustrating how the imagination of the writers together with the technical abilities of the film makers combined to produce a film of a particular period.

Keith Williamson.  
UFO Research Section.

+ + + + + BOOK REVIEW + + + + +  
+ 'Socorro Saucer' by Ray Stanford - Fonatana, 1978. pp 191, 85p +  
+ Subtitled 'The closest encounter of them all', this book is an in-depth +  
+ investigation of the UFO encounter of a police patrolman Lonnie Zamora at +  
+ Socorro, New Mexico. It is not to be missed by anyone interested in the +  
+ UFO phenomena as it discloses a lot of information on the case which has +  
+ not been previously released. It may surprise readers of the book to +  
+ know that there were in fact eleven visual witnesses to the event; that +  
+ three separate itmes of physical evidence were obtained and many more in- +  
+ teresting facts which were censored by the authorities. +  
+ Ray Stanford is the Director of the Project Starlight International, +  
+ a UFO hard-data monitoring and recording facility, and edits the Journal +  
+ for Instrumented UFO Research. +  
+ The final chapter in the book is devoted to explaining this recent +  
+ method of UFO research. +  
+ + + + +

In LANTERN 16 details were given of mystery lights and flares seen in the skies over Norfolk and Suffolk in 1976. Back in November 1968, almost exactly 8 years earlier, Norfolk people were treated to a similar aerial display.

On the night of November 20th at about 7pm a group of 'brilliant white objects emitting a yellow-orange glow streaked across the sky.' According to the local press they, the police and the local TV station were inundated with calls, the Eastern Daily Press receiving more than 60 alone. Although it seems certain that all the witnesses observed the lights their descriptions were many and varied; Captain J.B. Waugh of the Trinity House ship 'Vestal' which was 7 miles off the Norfolk coast at the time said he saw only one object, travelling from north to south, with about 15 trails coming from it.

A Resident of Thorpe End, Norwich, said he saw 20 or 30 small lights in rigid formation. A Norwich man said that the object looked like 'a rocket' at the end of which were "little sparks and inbetween the sparks were lights like small electric light bulbs". Mr. Rounce of Hemblington, said the objects were heading in a S direction and numbered about 30 to 40 in colours of orange, green and white, which kept changing. They appeared to be in some formation, he said, and each light seemed to have a tail. He watched them for about 10 seconds and then they suddenly disappeared.

A Bodham lady said it looked like "one big star with hundreds of little coloured tails coming from it, some red, some green." However, 2 students at the UEA described the object as being very long and thin, with lights in the front and in the middle, and many more at the back. A Thetford man described them as several bright lights like rockets (the bonfire night kind). Many people in Caister reported seeing a trail of vivid lights in the sky. People at Ditichingham saw "two very bright meteorites casting off a lot of sparks", while several people at Sheringham saw a yellow ball which broke up changing to a blue colour. All the reports stated the object(s) were silent. The Royal Greenwich observatory said it was "almost certainly a Russian satellite re-entering the atmosphere." An Air Ministry spokesman said there were one or two possible cause either space debris burning-up or a meteorite cloud.

IN February, 1968, mystery green lights were seen in the sky in the Lowestoft area and the Lifeboat was launched. In August 1971 three strange lights were seen over Lowestoft, one red, one orange and the other buish-white. Again,  
(continued on page 94)

MYSTERY  
\* LIGHTS \*

## EXCHANGE MAGAZINES

### NEW (to us) MAGAZINES:

**SANGREAL:** Litho'd; an illustrated journal of the mysteries, crafts and folk-traditions of Britain. Published quarterly in February, May, August & November. Single copies 65p. annual sub. £2.50 (US \$5 by surface mail), all post free. Please make payment out to SANGREAL and send to BM SANGREAL, London, WCIV 6XX.

**THE CAULDRON:** duplicated, quarterly; newsletter of witchcraft, folklore and the Old Religion. (see page 3). 20p for sample from M.Howard, 18a Church Hill, Purley Surrey.

**ALBION:** Litho'd; published by the Institute of Geomantic Research, a new national mag. for enquiry into the ancient mysteries of Britain. Single copies 50p in p&p; 4 issue subscription £2 from the IGR, 142 Pheasant Rise, Bar Hill, Cambs.CB3 8SD.

**RITUAL MAGIC IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND:** BY N.Pennick. I.G.R. Occasional Paper No. II: The consecration mysteries of Liverpool Cathedral compared with ancient usage. 30p inc p & p from the I.G.R. (address as above)

**WARK:** Litho'd; Reviews of 'fanzines', 'comicazines' and fortean publications. Single copies 30p, or 3 issues sub. 85p inc. p & p. From Rosemary Pardoe, Flat 2, 38 Sandown Road, Liverpool I5.

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**SKYWATCH:** duplicated, bi-monthly. UFOs and related phenomena. Journal of the Manchester Aerial Phenomena Team (MAPIT). Annual sub to skywatch/MAPIT £2.30; from 92 Hillcrest road, Offerton, Stockport, Cheshire, SK2 5SE.

**MUFOB:** litho'd, quarterly; an informal journal devoted to UFOlogy and associated subjects. Annual sub. £1.25 from John Rimmer, 11 Beverly Road, New Maldon, Surrey.

**FORTEAN TIMES:** litho'd, quarterly. THE magazine of curiosities, mysteries and strange phenomena. Annual Sub £3., single copies 75p from R.J.MRickard, c/o Dark They Were and Golden-Eyed, 9/12 St. Annes Court, London W1 (Note new address)

**THE LEY HUNTER:** litho'd, quarterly. The magazine of 'earth mysteries' Annual Sub for UK and Europe, £2.70 from Paul Devereux, PO Box 152, London, N10 1EP.

**PICWINNARD:** litho'd, bi-monthly; the Magazine of Wessex leys and folklore. Annual sub is £2.00 inc. p & p; single copies 35p inc. p&p. From Vince Russett, Hythe Bow, Cheddar, Somerset, BS27 3EH.

**JOURNAL OF GEOMANCY:** duplicated/litho illustrations; quarterly. Published by the Institute of Geomantic Research (IGR). Single copies 60p or full membership to the IGR £3 per annum from, Nigel Pennick, 142 Pheasant Rise, Bar Hill, Cambs.,

**NORTHERN UFO NEWS:** duplicated. monthly letter of the Northern UFO Network. Details from Jenny Randles, 23 Sunningdale Drive, Irlam, Manchester, M30 6NJ.

**AWARENESS:** duplicated, quarterly journal of Contact International (UK). All aspects of UFO research, interesting articles. Full details of Awareness and Contact from; J.B.Delair, 19 Cumnor Road, Boars Hill, Oxford.

**ANCIENT SKILLS AND WISDOM REVUE:** duplicated, quarterly; Reviews of books and mags on leys, folklore, geomancy, earth mysteries etc. Annual Sub is £2, from Paul Screeton, 5 Egton Drive, Seaton Carew, Hartlepool, Cleveland. TS25 2AT.

**EARTHLINK:** duplicated, quarterly, journal of the Essex UFO Study Group (EUFOSG). UFOs and associated phenomena. Single copies 62p inc. p & p; four issue subscription £2.50 inc. p & p. from, The Secretary, EUFOSG, 16 Raydons Road, Dagenham, Essex. RM9 5JR.

**THE CHRISTIAN PARAPSYCHOLOGIST:** a professionally produced mag dealing with psychical phenomena from a religious viewpoint. Quarterly, annual Sub £2, from: The Churches Fellowship for Psychical & Spiritual Studies; St. Mary Abchurch, Abchurch Lane; London, EC4N 7BA.

**UFO RESEARCH REVIEW:** litho'd, quarterly. Scientific approach to UFO research. Journal of the Nottingham UFO Investigation Society. Single copies 25p. Full details from NUFOIS, 443 Meadow Lane, Nottingham, NG2 3GB.

Unfortunately, space does not permit reviews any other exchange mags., so we have omitted those from overseas until the next issue of LANTERN

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THE WINTER '78 EDITION OF LANTERN WILL BE AVAILABLE IN DECEMBER: DONT MISS IT!

# SPELLTHORN NO.1.

ESNA was formed in April of 1976 as a sort of 'offshoot' of ESIG, with the express intention of collecting, recording and documenting the 'folk-history' of these eastern regions, centred (from necessity) on the immediate area of Lowestoft. Our interests are rather hard to categorize; suffice it to say that we touch on many subjects, among them folklore and custom, legend and ghostlore, traditional song and, perhaps hardest of all to define, the more curious and neglected aspects of local archaeology and history. Unlike ESIG, we do not investigate such things as UFOs, modern ghosts, parapsysics and suchlike. But we hope that, in our own divergent ways, we may be able to complement one another, and thus it is that the flow of information between us is constant and open.

ESNA itself is not an organisation, but "a collection of compatible researchers united under one corporate title for, among other things, sheer convenience", to quote from elsewhere.

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The following publications are still available from ESNA, either s/o 'Lantern', or at the usual ESNA address: 21, Kirkley Gardens, Lowestoft. (All prices include postage.)

'Haunted Lowestoft'.....I.A.W.Bunn & M.W.Burgess.....40p.

'Local Curiousities'.....I.A.W.Bunn & M.W.Burgess.....40p.

'The Standing Stones of Norfolk & Suffolk'.....M.W.Burgess.....60p.

In October (or thereabouts) will be published the first in a new series of ESNA publications, to be called the 'ANGLIAN RESEARCH PAPERS'. ARP No.1 will be called 'The Bury St. Edmunds Terrestrial Zodiac', being a complete exposition with maps and diagrams of the subject which has featured in two previous issues of 'Lantern', but containing also a 'critique of zodiacs' (.) Further papers envisaged in this series include ones on the dragon in East Anglia, stone crosses, holy wells and secret tunnel/ley line correlations. In ESNA's own Occasional Papers we have forthcoming the results of our mammoth investigation into the legendary tunnels and crypts under Lowestoft (which is now entering its third year). Ivan Bunn has already written and prepared for publication a work on Oulton and its famous flamboyant character George Borrow, and he is also currently doing unique historical studies into the case of the two Lowestoft witches. This is being accomplished together with Prof. Gilbert Geis of the Dept. of Social Ecology at the University of California (Irvine.)

\*\*\*\*\*

'SpellThorn' has two main aims: the first is to provide a regular outlet of information as to ESNA's current activities and research; the second, to act as a modern version of the 'Notes & Queries' collections much-beloved in the 1930's. In other words, we intend 'SpellThorn' to be a completely 'open sheet', so to speak, in that we are inviting any reader of 'Lantern' who has information or a query about any oddment of East Anglian curiosa to write to us. We will publish everything we receive, and if it is a query, we will do our very best to answer it. This first issue of 'SpellThorn' has, of necessity, been more verbose than will be the rule in future, so enough of talking, and on to the meat:

\*\*\*\*\*In response to ESNA Occ. Paper No.1, Mr. John G. Williams of Abergavenny (who is well noted in 'British Mysteries' circles as a dowser and exponent of ley/SCMB lines) has sent a short list of var-



ious old stones in Norfolk and Suffolk that are not on our files. Further info from anyone who knows of them would be welcome:

- 1) Salhouse (Norf.)...TG288157...near Bear's Grove, on north side of Norwich to Wroxham road.
- 2) Shouldham Thorpe (Norf.)...TF655090)... 'Fodderstone' slightly NW of crossroads, at village inn.
- 3) Swannington (Norf.)...TG145212...side of road next to cornfield; marked as 'stump cross'.
- 4) Drinkstone (Suff.)...TL960616...side of road, near church.
- 5) Edwardstone (Suff.)...TL941422...NE of church, 'twixt Hall and Wardentree Farm.
- 6) Preston St. Mary (Suff.)...TL946504... 'Dolmen' (?) at church.
- 7) Willisham (Suff.)...TM082519...On parish boundary 'twixt Bonny Wood and Ditch Wood.

This last would seem to be the same stone that is mentioned in a charter giving a perambulation of the bounds of the manor of Barkling with Needham Market: "...to a place called Deadmans-stone, and from the said Deadmans-stone to a Wood called Ditchewood..."

2 \*\*\*\*\*Mr. W.J. Chambers, a BSIG member in Saffron Walden, has sent a cutting from the 'Sunday Express' of May 14th, 1950, which runs as follows:

"A quaint stone monument at the bottom of the garden of Mr. Harry Bodgers' new council house did not please Mrs. Bodgers at all. So Mr. Bodgers dug it up and buried it. But he didn't know that the stone had been a landmark in the village of Marshland Smeeth, Norfolk, for 500 years. It was known as Hickathrift's Candlestick, weighed three-quarters of a ton, and was named after a legendary giant. Now the Ministry of Works may be approached for an order to have the monument exhumed."

What we would like to know is, how did one man manage to dig up a 1-ton lump of stone, where on earth is Marshland Smeeth, and is this just a jumbled version of the real 'Hickathrift's Candlesticks' (there are three, actually medieval crosses) further north at Tilney and Terrington?

3 \*\*\*\*\*We have a note of an odd thorn tree at Parham in Suffolk, which was at one time compared with the more famous Glastonbury Thorn. Apparently, this tree flowered both at Christmas and at its usual time. But a rather cynical letter in the 'Ipswich Journal' of 13/1/1753 claimed that it had actually flowered 11 days earlier than Yuletide, in order to fit in with the changeover of calendar from Julian to Gregorian the previous year!

4 \*\*\*\*\*Does anyone know the exact location of the mineral spring about 1/2 a mile from Sudbury that is called 'holy water' by the locals?

5 \*\*\*\*\*Subsequent to the article in the last issue of 'Lantern' on secret tunnels where one was mentioned as running from Kings Lynn's Red Mount Chapel to Greyfriars, we find the legend of another from the same place, this time to Castle Rising. Also, and perhaps of interest to geomancers, the mound on which the Chapel stands was once called 'Guanock Hill': a peculiar name, supposedly from an old East Anglian dialect word meaning 'a beacon'.

6 \*\*\*\*\*In the grounds of Great Ashfield House (Suff.) is a stone cross, which tradition says once formed a bridge over the stream at the entrance to the churchyard. This is a 'wheel-headed' cross, possibly Celtic, with its broken shaft 10 1/2 feet high. It stands on a base of rubble in its original socket stone (22" x 21" x 6" high).

End of 'SpellThorn' No.1.

M.W.Burgess.

